

## **ART DEPARTMENT PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

Academic Year: 01/10 – 02/10

Completed by Mike Sleadd, Art Department Chair

### **Sources of Evaluative Information**

#### **Portfolio Assessment**

BA, BS and BFA portfolios of advanced work are evaluated by the Art Department faculty as part of the students' ARTS 496 Senior Portfolio courses. The course description:

Culminating experience course for all art degrees. This course is for both portfolio development and to provide information into the practical application of professional practices, business skills and career planning specific to the discipline of studio art and design. It assists the art/design major in building a professional career and/or pursuing advanced education or training. Students present a portfolio of their most recent work to faculty and guests at the end of this course. This portfolio is part of the Art Department's program assessment. Students select a faculty mentor to assist them in their portfolio project. This course is required of all BA, BS and BFA students.

These portfolios must include the following works:

- 7 drawings (2 pages of sketchbook drawings)
- 3 paintings
- Optional 3-D work
- A Minimum of 10 images from major area
- A Minimum of 5 images from Senior Thesis Project that were completed during the current semester. The exact number of images you include in your Senior Thesis presentation will be decided by your Senior Thesis Project mentor.

Students must include the following in their presented documentation:

- Semester each work was created
- Class that the work was produced for
- Professor for this project
- Overview of assignment
- Personal analysis of the work

The ARTS 201 Introduction to Studio Art course that was established as a way to compare our students' entry-level skills and their exit proficiency was reevaluated and discontinued. The course was shown to have little value in comparison and many of our students entering as transfer students were taking the course as juniors. We have decided to evaluate on the basis of ARTS 496 Senior Portfolio alone. BFA students also have an exhibit and defense in addition to ARTS 496.

#### **BFA Exhibition and Defense**

Each BFA student is required to present an exhibition of their art in the Sidney Larson Gallery during the final semester of their Senior year. The artwork must be professionally presented and provide a cohesive body of work, demonstrating their advanced technical and conceptual abilities. The department faculty reviews the student's show a few weeks prior to the exhibition.

During the exhibition the BFA student is required to make a “gallery talk” where they comment on the works in the show and field questions from those attending the reception.

Also during the exhibition the faculty meets with the student for an oral defense. The student is asked questions concerning their artwork, their exhibition and reflections on their art education at Columbia College. After the examination the faculty vote on whether or not to allow the student to graduate with the BFA degree. The department accepted all students during this time period.

Examples of questions/discussion topics during the oral defense:

- Talk about the show in general. Faculty will then pick out specific works to discuss.
- How did you choose your concentration/major and why?
- Discussion concept/subject matter.
- Explain your “thinking process” in designing your exhibition.
- What artists have been major influences on your work? Give examples.
- What is the biggest roadblock in your art production?
- What drives you to be creative?
- What does your work say about you as an artist?
- What discipline is required in putting together a one-person exhibition?
- What was the single most important thing you learned in the past four years? Or, what was the single most important thing you learned in the CC program?
- Any suggestions you have for program improvement?

On a personal note, I believe that our students are better at discussing technique than they are at discussing concepts. Concept needs more focus in our art curriculum.

#### **Agency for Program Evaluation and Change and Feedback Loop**

Full-time faculty assess the performance of students in the BFA reviews, and ARTS 496 assessments. Adjunct faculty often give their input into student performance, but final evaluation is left to the full-time art faculty. We also take to heart comments made by individuals attending the BFA exhibits and share comments with our students. Student assessment is discussed at faculty meetings where course revisions to address observed weaknesses are discussed.

During the ARTS 496 Senior Portfolio presentations students present their portfolios as PowerPoint presentations to the full faculty. The faculty view the 15 minute presentations and follow with questions.

Students are ranked in 10 criteria under three categories:

- Basic Artistic Principles
  - Knowledge of Drawing
  - Principles of Design
  - Technique and Media
- Creative Traits
  - Originality
  - Concept Development
  - Problem Solving
  - Personal Aesthetic
- Portfolio Presentation

- Presentation Skills
- Organization
- Level and quality of Work Shown

Students received ranking as follows in each of the 10 criteria:

- Accomplished
- Proficient
- Developing
- Unsatisfactory

### **Feedback Loop Results**

#### **Analysis from faculty reviews of student 496 presentations**

##### Fall 2010 (Eight students reviewed—one BFA in the group)

- Three students had strong portfolios and presentations, scoring “proficient” or “accomplished” in several categories.
- Five students had average, or slightly above, portfolios and presentations, scoring “developing” or slightly above in six or more categories.
- No students were unsatisfactory in any categories.
- The strongest categories were “Originality,” “Concept Development,” “Problem Solving,” and “Organization.”
- The weak areas were “Knowledge of Drawing,” “Techniques and Media,” and “Personal Aesthetic.”

##### Spring 2011 (Nine students reviewed—no BFA students)

- Four students had strong portfolios and presentations, scoring “proficient” or “accomplished” in several categories.
- Four students had average portfolios and presentations, scoring “developing” or slightly above in most categories.
- One student was considered “unsatisfactory,” or slightly above, in most categories.
- The strongest categories were “Design,” “Problem Solving,” “Presentation,” and “Organization.”
- The weak areas were “Knowledge of Drawing,” “Technique and Media,” “Originality,” and “Personal Aesthetic.”

### **BFA Exhibit and Defense**

There was only one BFA student in the fall of 2010. This photography student had an excellent exhibit and is now an MFA graduate student at the University of Missouri. His defense was strong with thoughtful answers to difficult questions.

The spring semester had four graduating BFA students. This was a diverse group of students and all produced excellent artwork and well received exhibitions. Of this group one is currently in the MU MFA program in painting, one is an MFA student at Fontbonne University in painting and jewelry, and another is working locally as an artist and plans on attending graduate school in the 2012. One of the

BFA graduates is an active painter/drawer and shows regularly, but has no plans at the moment to attend graduate school. All students demonstrated artistic/creative talent in their exhibitions and were articulate and knowledgeable in their defense.

### **Progress on Recommendations from Previous Report**

Although we have begun work in revising our art curriculum we can expect major changes in the near future as the makeup of our department is transformed. We have one new faculty member and will add two more over the next year.

As we revise the curriculum I believe we need to address our students' ability to develop original vision and skills at problem solving. Part of this would also include instruction in aesthetics which might be addressed as an additional course in our non-studio sequence.

As stated in our previous report, not all design and photography students are going to be excellent "drawers." This might be more of a problem with our evaluation instrument than a problem with our students themselves. We should consider evaluating students according to majors and not hold them all to the same standards as our "fine art" (painting, drawing, printmaking) students. Our faculty will discuss this next semester.